

Monthly Update



School Nutrition Programs

January 8, 2025

Distributed to the School Nutrition Program Authorized Representatives Listserv and the Food Service Directors Listserv and posted at <https://cnw.ksde.org>, SNP, SNP Monthly Updates

Important Updates, Reminders, & Deadlines

State Holiday - January 9

Thursday, January 9 has been designated a state holiday in observance of the National Day of Mourning for President Jimmy Carter. The Contracting with a Food Service Management Company training and Town Hall meeting scheduled for this day have been rescheduled to January 16 at their original times.

Town Hall Thursday at 2 - January 16 (DATE CHANGED)

The January Town Hall will provide important reminders and updates for SNP and CACFP. Join the meeting on January 16 at 2 pm at this link:

<https://ksde.zoom.us/j/87204779621?pwd=NEhrcHloRjBobGtOZTJEWfJtR0tUQT09> Meeting ID: 872 0477 9621 Passcode: 746337

Contracting with a Food Service Management Company Training - January 16 (DATE CHANGED)

An important training session for Sponsors considering contracting with a Food Service Management Company for SY 2025-26 will be held on January 16 from 9-11 am via Zoom. Join the training at

<https://ksde.zoom.us/j/85250069275?pwd=ORdmBaW039KbxW6hEL6CAcqHBbpdGt.1> Meeting ID: 852 5006 9275 Passcode: 753001

KSDE Website Address & Email Changes

As of January 8, the KSDE website address will switch from ksde.org to ksde.gov. The Child Nutrition & Wellness website address will switch from cnw.ksde.org to cnw.ksde.gov. If someone types in the old address, they will automatically be redirected to the .gov address.

As of January 15, KSDE employee email addresses are moving to a new industry standard. The new default address will be firstname.lastname@ksde.gov. For example, John Doe will be John.Doe@ksde.gov. The old address will still work to receive emails, so individuals will not experience any disruption in service.

Other important dates & deadlines (with more information below):

- **USDA Patrick Leahy Farm to School Grant deadline** - January 10
- **Heartland Farm to School Institute deadline** - January 15
- **Annual On-Site Accountability Review must be completed** - February 1

USDA Patrick Leahy Farm to School Grant Deadline is January 10

The Fiscal Year 2025 **USDA Patrick Leahy Farm to School Grant** Request for Applications (RFA) is now available! Applications are due by 11:59 pm ET on January 10, 2025. Schools and school districts, CACFP and Summer sponsors, Indian tribal organizations, State agencies, local agencies, non-profit



organizations, and agricultural producers are encouraged to apply. Applicants may apply for grants of up to \$100,000 in one of the five grant tracks. State agencies, Indian tribal organizations, or other eligible organizations proposing projects that are multi-state or national in scope may apply for up to \$500,000. RFAs by desired grant track:

- Implementation: <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/356877>
- Turnkey: <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/356876>
- State Agency: <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/356878>

Be sure to visit the [applicant resources page](#) for more helpful resources, including links to webinars that provide specific assistance on applying for a Farm to School Grant.

Heartland Farm to School Institute Deadline Extended to January 15

The deadline to apply for the 2025 Heartland Farm to School Institute has been extended to January 15. The Heartland Farm to School Institute aims to assist schools in incorporating Farm to School programming in the classroom, cafeteria, and community. The year-long Institute kicks off May 2025 with a retreat where school teams will engage in action planning to set programmatic goals with the assistance of a coach and learn through educational sessions.

Following the retreat, teams will implement their Farm to School action plans with the support of the Institute network consisting of their coach, organizations across the three states, and the cohort of participating teams. Participation in the Institute is free. The Heartland Farm to School Institute application can be found on the Child Nutrition & Wellness website at cnw.ksde.org under [Farm to Plate, What's New](#). For more information contact Eryn Davis at edavis@ksde.org

Annual On-Site Accountability Reviews – Complete by February 1

Sponsors with more than one serving site must complete on-site accountability reviews by February 1. The reviews must be completed at all sites approved to participate in the National School Lunch Program and 50% of sites approved to participate in the School Breakfast Program. It is a best practice to rotate review of breakfast sites to ensure all sites are monitored at least every other year. The School Food Service On-Site Accountability Review (Form 9-G) can be accessed at <https://cnw.ksde.org>, SNP, SNP Food Service Facts, Chapter 9. A tutorial demonstrating how to complete annual on-site monitoring is available on the KSDE Training Portal under K12 Staff > Child Nutrition & Wellness: Tutorials > SNP Tutorials > Developing Counting and Claiming Policies and Procedures (45 min).

The purpose of the on-site review is to ensure the accountability system (as reported on the site application) is being used correctly and yields an accurate number of reimbursable free, reduced price, and paid meals. Someone who is not involved with the daily operation of the system must complete the review. If the review discloses problems with a school's meal counting or claiming procedures, corrective action must be implemented by the sponsor. A follow-up review must be conducted within 45 calendar days following the first review to determine that the corrective action resolved the problems. Keep completed reviews on file with other food service records for review or audit.



Professional Development & Training

Training Opportunities

Many opportunities for learning are available to SNP sponsors. Go to <https://cnw.ksde.org>, Training, CNW Calendar to access the schedule of live classes with dates, times, and Zoom links. Upcoming trainings include:

- **Meal Modification Basics** on January 14 from 2-3 pm
- **Food Safety Basics** on January 15 from 2-5 pm
- **Contracting with a Food Service Management Company** on January 16 from 9-11 am
- **Procurement 101: The Basics** on January 22 from 2-3 pm
- **Jump Start Your Success in School Nutrition Programs** on January 30 in Salina
- **Wellness Wednesdays** each Wednesday in February from 9:30-10:30 am

Training is offered 24/7 on the KSDE Training Portal. Create an account at <https://learning.ksde.org>. For detailed instructions on creating an account, go to <https://cnw.ksde.org>, Training.

If you would like to schedule an in-service, culinary coach session, or have questions about professional development, contact Holly Steinlage at hsteinlage@ksde.org.

Culinary Coaches – NEW Training Program!

KSDE Child Nutrition & Wellness is excited to be launching a Culinary Coaches Program in SY 2025! This training opportunity allows sponsors to request in-person, hands-on culinary training conducted at their site. The sessions will be led by trained culinary coaches and will focus on developing culinary skills that will better enable child nutrition program sponsors to prepare scratch and speed scratch recipes. If interested in scheduling a culinary coach session, please contact Holly Steinlage at hsteinlage@ksde.org.

Procurement Training – January 22

Per the Child Nutrition Program Integrity Final Rule, school nutrition program directors, management, and/or staff who work on procurement activities must complete procurement training annually. For School Year 2025-26, all sponsors must complete procurement training by June 30, 2025. The first opportunity for meeting SY 2025-26 requirements will be on January 22 from 2-3 pm via Zoom. Join the training at <https://ksde.zoom.us/j/89019977097?pwd=ij6sFSr3AhEEDyExpdvNwfpizYRDjK.1> Passcode: 646112. A repeat session will be offered in May, and the training will also be on the KSDE Training Portal.

Jump Start Your Success in School Nutrition Programs – January 30

If you missed the Fall 2024 Jump Start Your Success in School Nutrition Programs, make sure to join Child Nutrition & Wellness for the spring kick-off event on Thursday, **January 30, from 9 am to 3 pm in Salina**. Jump Start is a free, multi-week program that offers a blend of in-person, live virtual, and on-demand trainings for new and aspiring school food service directors and managers. This training opportunity is for those with less than three years of experience.

Developed to incorporate personalized training and leadership development through mentoring activities, Jump Start encourages open-group discussion so participants can be actively involved in learning best practices from the field. Participants who complete the Jump Start program will develop the skills and knowledge needed for the successful operation of school nutrition programs. **For more information or to register, contact Holly Steinlage at hsteinlage@ksde.org.**



Virtual Wellness Workshops in February

Join KSDE for the "Wellness Wednesdays" webinar series in February. A one-hour Zoom session will be offered each Wednesday morning in February with topics aimed at assisting Kansas school wellness committees in implementing wellness policies and creating healthier school environments. This year's theme is Heart Health. Sessions will be from 9:30 to 10:30 am at this link:

<https://ksde.zoom.us/j/81507958865?pwd=bx7xCpCRuewqd6WAw1NMzbDA1o5Fie.1> Passcode: 512850

- **February 5, Improving & Maintaining Heart Health in Children: How We Can Have an Impact.** Join KSDE Child Nutrition & Wellness in kicking off the Wellness Wednesdays series with an introduction to this year's theme, Heart Health. Learn about the American Heart Association's "Life's Essential 8 for Kids" - key measures for improving and maintaining cardiovascular health. Hear best practices and new ideas for how to further support heart health and overall wellness by promoting healthy habits at an early age.
- **February 12, Tobacco Use: Why Prevention Efforts are Critical to Protecting Young Hearts.** Tobacco use in any form, including cigarettes and e-cigarettes, can have lifelong harmful effects on the cardiovascular health of children and adolescents. Join Teresa Denk Smajda, Student Wellness Specialist at Shawnee Mission School District, to learn why tobacco prevention efforts at a young age are important and hear initiatives available to support schools.
- **February 19 & 26** – Stay tuned for more details!

USDA Updates

Request for Information: Grain-Based Desserts and High-Protein Yogurt Crediting in Child Nutrition Programs

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) requests comments from the public. The request for information was issued on December 26, 2024, to obtain input to help inform future policymaking, guidance, and technical assistance related to grain-based desserts and high-protein yogurt crediting in Child Nutrition Programs (CNP). The public is invited to submit comments to www.regulations.gov through March 26, 2025.

On February 7, 2023, FNS issued a [proposed rule](#) to update Child Nutrition Program (CNP) meal pattern requirements. The rule included a proposal to limit grain-based desserts in the School Breakfast Program to no more than two ounce equivalents per week, consistent with the National School Lunch Program. However, based on public feedback, FNS did not finalize that proposed limit in the [final rule](#), which published on April 25, 2024. Partners raised concerns that the proposal would limit options at school breakfast and recommended that FNS re-evaluate use of grain-based desserts at school breakfast. In the final rule, USDA committed to exploring methods for improving and simplifying grain-based dessert requirements by soliciting further partner input.

Yogurt is a popular menu item in CNPs. It may be offered in a variety of forms: plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened, strained or non-strained, and/or high-protein or regular; as a standalone option or in different menu items, such as yogurt parfaits or smoothies. The variety of yogurt available at retail and in the K-12 market, including high-protein yogurt (e.g., Greek and Greek-style yogurt), has grown and evolved significantly. Therefore, in 2017, FNS requested public input on whether high-protein yogurt (including Greek and Greek-style yogurt) should credit differently than regular yogurt. Those comments were mixed and, as a result, FNS maintained consistent crediting for all yogurt in the CNPs. FNS is now seeking additional public input to determine if any new information warrants a change to yogurt crediting in the CNPs.



SP 07-2025, CACFP 07-2025: Requirement to Accept Medical Statements from Registered Dietitians for Schools and Child and Adult Care Institutions and Facilities

This memorandum with Questions and Answers clarifies the updated regulatory requirement for Program operators to accept medical statements from registered dietitians. This requirement applies to Program operators of the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The change requiring Program operators to accept medical statements from registered dietitians must be implemented by July 1, 2025, for school meal programs and October 1, 2025, for CACFP. Program operators have the option, but are not required, to implement this change prior to the implementation dates.

New Resources

Harvest of the Month Resources Available for 2025

Harvest of the Month materials are now available on the Child Nutrition & Wellness website at <https://cnw.ksde.org> under **Farm to Plate, What's New**. Materials include Pre-K through 5th grade curriculum, poster and sticker graphics, newsletters, social media graphics and more. January's Harvest of the Month is Beef! Show how you're showcasing beef in menus by using the hashtag #fuelingskids.

Earn a Free Culinary Kit for Your School Kitchen

Participate in the Local Foods Culinary Training that is available on the KSDE Training Portal and earn a free culinary kit for your school kitchen! Each school kitchen with a staff member completing the training is eligible to receive a culinary toolkit consisting of a dough cutter, wire whisk, digital scale, and blender (1 kit per school kitchen), while supplies last. Instructions for completing the survey to receive the toolkit are posted at the end of the online training. This 2-hour training features Kansas products and producers, gives helpful information on how to implement Farm to Plate in Kansas Child Nutrition Programs, and provides recipes and culinary tips for incorporating the Kansas products featured in the training into local menus. Go to <https://learning.ksde.org>, Child Nutrition Programs (General Classes), Local Foods Culinary Training (2 Hours), to access this training.

Staffing Update

Kirsten Angell has joined the Child Nutrition & Wellness team as a Child Nutrition Consultant and Farm to Plate Coordinator. Welcome Kirsten!

As always, if you have questions or need technical assistance, please contact your Child Nutrition Consultant or the Topeka office.

The CNW Team



For more information, contact:

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